Control (Alt. Del.)

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by xstarxchaserx

Summary

Some part of Hannibal is proud, deeply so, and an even smaller part of him is cautiously optimistic. More than either, though, he's just cautious. He knows Will is volatile. Knows how deep their wounds go. Knows it would be remiss to underestimate him.

But his caution has only ever gone so far with Will Graham.

"So you wanted to run off into the sunset, as they say?"

"I wanted to be prepared for any eventuality."

In which Will is finally honest with both himself and Hannibal.

Notes

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“I didn’t kill Freddie Lounds.”

The words hang in the air as the next set of papers, of evidence, leaves Hannibal’s hand and flutter into the flames. It’s not the words themselves that pull him up short. He had smelled the sickening perfume earlier in the evening, felt the betrayal curl, cold and bitter in his stomach. He had shifted his plans for dinner the following evening, had even planned— with exquisite detail— just how he was going to kill Will Graham.

No, his surprise found its roots in the fact that Will had actually *told* him.

“I’m aware,” Hannibal replies. A truth for a truth.

“I know. I had decided I was going to tell you before I even stepped into your office, but I did notice the shift. Not so careful around me anymore, Doctor.”

Hannibal hums lightly. “And where did you expect this conversation to go, Will?”

“I have a bag packed, in my car already. My dogs are with my neighbors.”

“A risky move, if Jack is watching you.”

“He is most definitely watching me, which is why I told him ahead of time that I was leaving them with her.” Will’s tone shifts, going shaky and light. “Oh, Jack. What if he gets us? What if he comes for them? I can’t leave Winston stranded!” He sighs. “It was… disgustingly easy.”

Some part of Hannibal is proud, deeply so, and an even smaller part of him is cautiously optimistic. More than either, though, he’s just cautious. He knows Will is volatile. Knows how deep their wounds go. Knows it would be remiss to underestimate him.

But his caution has only ever gone so far with Will Graham.

“So you wanted to run off into the sunset, as they say?”

“I wanted to be prepared for any eventuality.”

Hannibal studies him for a minute. His head is up, shoulders back, posture straight with only a shiver of anxiety or anticipation making it look forced, but only just. Hannibal pushes, he has to, has to be sure that he is reading the situation correctly, because if not, he has calls to make.

“We have dinner plans for tomorrow evening. It would be incredibly rude of us to cancel so last minute.”

“I’m aware,” Will replies, echoing the same detached tone Hannibal had used for those words just moments before. “And I do know how much you hate to be rude.”

Hannibal finds himself at a loss for words for the first time since Mason Verger stabbed a knife into the arm of his chair. It is a gift he had never anticipated, never truly let himself believe he would obtain, and yet here it is, handed to him on a silver platter with no prompting or psychic driving to be found. There were layers to unpack here, Hannibal knew.

But first…

“Tell me, Will. Who did you bring to dinner?”

“Randal Tier.”

The breath leaves Hannibal harsher than he anticipates. Randal Tier. Will said the name so casually, as though it wasn’t enough to shake Hannibal to the core. Another monster of his creation, though flawed in ways that the radiant man before him was not.

Randal Tier, the bitter taste of fear an easy echo for Hannibal to pull up to his tongue.

“Randal Tier had a pressurized, mechanical suit that was designed to rend your body limb from limb, and he died *afraid of you?”*

“Yes,” Will replies simply, then steps fully into Hannibal’s personal space. “Tell me, Doctor Lecter. Are you afraid of me?”

Hannibal is aware of all of the weapons in the room at once. The fire behind him, the brass bottomed lamp on the mantle piece, the scalpel on the desk, the stag.

Will.

And yet… much like his caution, his self-preservation has always been undermined by his curiosity.

“Afraid? No. *Cautious?* Absolutely. Fascinated? Proud?” Hannibal let the word settle around them for a moment before continuing. “Always. You are splendid, Will. It would be unwise for me to say so if I did not see you in your entirety, sharp edges and all.”

Will reaches out, takes the rest of the papers from Hannibal, and tosses them into the fire. Hannibal knows that Will doesn’t miss the hitch in his breath.

“Maybe just a *little* afraid, then.” There is a handbreadth of space between them, and Will cocks his head to the side *just so.*“Perhaps not… *just* afraid though, hm?”

He knows he’s been caught.

Has always been caught.

He almost flinches when Will raises his hand. He knows his pupils are dilated. He knows that his breathing is faster than it should be. He knows his pulse is elevated. He knows that he’s half erect already, and Will hasn’t even touched him.

Yet.

When his fingers do make contact, Hannibal is unprepared. They trace over the lines of his cheekbones, his jawline, over his lips, pressing into his mouth to run along the edges of his teeth. He is filled with the taste and sight and sound and feel of him— all shot through with that disgusting perfume, a reminder of just how dangerous this man is.

Hannibal has never been one to deny himself his vices, and never has he met a more tempting path to ruin than Will Graham.

“You would let me do anything to you, wouldn’t you?” The words are meant to be a question, but the finality of them, the certainty, catches Hannibal. For as much as he fears (yes, fears, he is so, so afraid of where this might actually lead), he can’t help the way his eyes flutter half closed.

With those fingers, slightly spit-slicked, running down the column of his throat, tracing his carotid artery, Hannibal finds his voice. “I believe you know the answer to that already, Will.”

“It’s always better to get that verbal confirmation, isn’t it? There has been a distinct *lack* of consent in our… relationship, wouldn’t you say? I think it’s time we changed that.”

“Do I need a safeword?” He says it for levity, to create distance, to give himself space. He says it because surely Will couldn’t mean—

“Do you think you would use it? Do you think you would ever want to stop me?”

— And then his mind fills with the comprehensive list of things that he would allow this man to do to him. He realizes the only way he would be satisfied with Death is if her justice was wrought on him by Will Graham’s hands. He’s in too deep, has far too much to lose, and yet…

Hannibal swallows, sees the moment of pride and triumph cross Will’s face, and he knows he’s lost.

“I didn’t think so,” Will says, easily.

“You have once chance, Hannibal,” he continues. “Just one. You can walk out that door, pack your things, make your calls, and disappear— alone. I will not look for you. I will not hunt you. That will be the end of whatever *this*,” Will gestures between the two of them, “is. Or you could, for the first time in all the years that I’ve known you, put that smart mouth of yours to good use and get on your knees. If you do that, Hannibal, if you make that move, I swear I *will* kill you if you try to leave.”

Hannibal knows it should take him longer than this, knows that the decision is entirely too easy, that some part of him— the history of himself— is probably scoffing.

And yet.

He slips easily to his knees, posture straight and graceful as he is in all things. He does not know when this man ruined him so thoroughly, only that it’s happened and there is no turning

back from it now. In this moment, the soft look of contentment and relief makes Will radiant, and there's nothing he wouldn't do to keep seeing that small smile for the rest of his life.

But there was more to the command than simply getting on his knees, and Hannibal sets to work undoing Will's belt. His scent is stronger at this height, intoxicating. The soft touch to his hair is not nearly as hesitant as Hannibal expected it would be. Will's fingers card through the strands, tugging gently, and Hannibal can't help the soft sigh that escapes his mouth.

His mouth which is supposed to be busy with something else entirely.

This was not the way he had first envisioned tasting Will Graham. Bitter, salty, unsurprising at first. An undercurrent of sweetness and heat, depths to match the man himself, thick and heavy on Hannibal's tongue. No lingering perfume scent here, nothing to detract from the present.

Will grips his hair tighter, hips moving in time with Hannibal's mouth. The taste of precum is stronger, the movements of both of them going erratic. Will shifts ever so slightly and presses one leather encased foot against Hannibal's groin at the same time that he finally presses into Hannibal's throat and it isn't long before the both of them are coming.

Hannibal pulls away once Will relaxes his grip on his hair and rests his face against Will's thigh, breathing heavy. Will rights his clothing, and when Hannibal is sure he's going to pull away, he leans in closer and rests his hand on the back on Hannibal's head.

"When you're ready, we should go and prepare, but take your time."

Hannibal does, waiting until his heart rate is under control before he stands and adjusts himself. Will takes his tie in hand and pulls him close, kissing him, and out of everything that's happened, the slow easy drag of Will's lips against his is what really threatens to undo him.

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The following night, it's Will who brings the knife across Jack's throat while Hannibal holds him in place. The betrayal is bitter and delicious, more than Will could have hoped for. Hannibal wants to lick the blood from his skin and says as much, delighting in the way Will's pupil's expand.

"Can the car wait?" Will asks.

"Not for nearly as long as I would need. I want to take my time with you."

They share a kiss, though, blood tinged and sweat soaked, before they pull on their jackets and walk out the door, together.

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